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Most writers on China fluctuate between admiration for the wonderful qualities of the Chinese people—taking "qualities" in an absolute sense and not as relative characteristics implying equivalent weaknesses—between this and despair over the political situation. Mr. Powell has little patience with the predatory methods employed by various foreign nations, yet he perceives clearly enough the farcical nature of Chinese attempts at republican self-government. There is, however, a measure of justice that can be secured for China without carrying principles of "self-determination" to the verge of absurdity. China should certainly have, for example, control of her own custom house.

Similarly in appraising the results of Japanese occupation of Korea and in dealing with the question of independence for the Philippines, Mr. Powell shows an equal fairness and an equal regard for facts. One detects no political bias in his discourse, no temperamental leaning toward "strong government" and no excess of sympathy for the under dog; no favoritism for any one race or people, though obviously he has had intimate relations with all of whom he writes.

On the whole, there is in this book uncommonly little that savors of propaganda, sentiment, or political theorizing. It is generally satisfactory and convincing.

WALL SHADOWS: A Study in American Prisons. By Frank Tannenbaum. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Mr. Tannenbaum's book is distinguished from most of what has been written about American prisons, not so much by the concreteness of his evidence—though the book is based upon thorough personal investigations—as by the acuteness and vigor of the author's analysis of prison psychology—the psychology of the prisoner and still more that of the jailer.

"Brutality," says the author, "is a constant factor—constant as the prison itself; and the publicity which upon occasion makes it known to the public bears only an accidental relation to the thing itself." Cruel penalties become common, not altogether through any innate disposition toward cruelty on the part of those possessing despotic authority, but mainly through the limitation of the field of punishment. When a man has been sent to prison—has been deprived of liberty and of personal property—the resources of further punishment to secure discipline are crude and few. Physical man-handling is a more or less logical result. The keeper, too, is a prisoner, living all day long in an atmosphere of suppressed emotion. There is, moreover, a conflict of two codes of morality. The prisoner feels that he is much better than the keeper and certainly as good as most people in the community. He is often convinced that all people are crooked, and that the only exceptional feature of his own case is that he has been caught. He is wrong, but it is a fact that he thinks thus; he feels it necessary to his self-respect to take this view, and consequently he will adhere to it. On the other hand, the keeper tends to suffer a disintegration of character from association with those whom he naturally deems vastly

inferior to him in the moral scale. A peculiarly subtle and almost irresistible form of egoism comes in on both sides, and under prison conditions only a saintly character could resist its influence. Naturally, neither prisoners nor keepers "grow into plaster saints." It is the system that is wrong.

The best remedy that has thus far been found seems to be the "prison democracy" advocated by Thomas Mott Osborne. Mr. Tannenbaum goes much further than this. Professionalization of prison administration and the destruction of present prison buildings are to him only beginnings. Ultimately he would do away with prisons altogether and would abandon the conception of *punishment*. For these extremer views he can hardly hope to gain acceptance or even serious consideration from the majority of his readers; yet a number of his less sweeping suggestions, such as the establishment of an institution for the examination and classification of convicts and the regular employment of indeterminate sentences, seem enlightened and practical. The really convincing ideas, however, grow out of the author's acute perception of prison psychology. The most striking result of experiments with prison democracy has been the discovery that under this system "the man who is the most insistent upon group approval—that is, the most sensitive and rebellious type under the old system—becomes the most social and serviceable type under democratic organization." The method, moreover, appears to have survived the severest test—that of its ability to deal with the *professional* criminal.

Wall Shadows is a book that is "human" without being in the least sentimental; it is well informed and analytical, yet savors not at all of the academic manner of the professional criminologist.

THE OPPIDAN. By Shane Leslie. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Mr. Leslie must have written *The Oppidan* largely for his own satisfaction: the book, if it sometimes wears the appearance of a satire, strikes one as on the whole a labor of love. There is something mysterious in the care with which the author lingers over the pettiest details and spreads a certain glamour over features admittedly mean and unpleasant. A labor of love, then, surely—else why this more or less rapt dwelling upon traditions that are at the same time more or less effectively exposed as snobbish or unreasonable? But the book seems somewhat at war with itself—there is a subdued note of satire and protest throughout the story.

It would be an easy way of dismissing the whole question merely to say that the novel is a realistic story of Eton. But this would be a mere contradiction of terms. Who can write a realistic story of school life, except, perhaps, as part of a larger story? School life is romantic or nothing and it is romantic in its own peculiar way. A purely realistic story of Eton or any other school would be unreadable—nor would a genuinely romantic story of school life be much more acceptable. It is in vain that Professor Canby of Yale points out that our American college life affords perhaps the largest field of romance as